

NORTHERN SPORTS FIELDS COMPLEX AND PARK COORDINATION
&
OVERSIGHT AD HOC COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
13 June 2002, 7:00 P.M.
Marshall Community Center Annex, Marshall, VA

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

The June 13, 2002 meeting of the Northern Sports Fields Complex and Park Coordination and Oversight Committee (NSFC) was called to order by the Chairman, Harry Atherton, at 7:05 PM.

Committee Members and Staff Present:

Harry Atherton, Board of Supervisors
Larry Miller, Parks & Recreation Director
Randy Wheeler, Deputy County Administrator
Bob Sinclair, Planning Commission
David Graham, Parks & Recreation Board
Marie Glascock, Scott District
Joan Fries, Marshall Business & Residents Association
George Downes, Jr., FYSCC
Ron Mabry, Project Officer
Sheriff Joe Higgs
Cynthia Hair, Staff

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Atherton delayed discussion of Item 7 on the evening's agenda as he and Mr. Downes have not had a chance to discuss the contract amendments. There were no further changes to the agenda.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of 5/9//02

There were no changes to the minutes of May 9, 2002 meeting and they were approved unanimously on a motion made by Mrs. Fries and seconded by Mr. Sinclair.

4. Scope of Work & Bid Process Update- Design Engineers

Mr. Mabry said five (5) companies had submitted proposals on the RFP for Engineering Design Services and the proposals are currently under review and ranking by a committee made up of Mr. Mabry, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Miller and Ms. Erway, the County's Procurement Division Director. Mr. Mabry indicated an engineering firm could be under contract by the end of July.

5. Safety and Use Issues at County Parks

Mr. Atherton asked Sheriff Higgs to give an overview of his observations and experience with security and safety issues at the parks and schools throughout the County. Sheriff

Higgs said that the Parks & Recreation department sets its own hours for County parks, generally from 7:00 AM until dusk, with one exception at Vint Hill for a lighted basketball court. He said the Vint Hill site is an occasional problem because people like to congregate after the game. He said, in general, there is very little trouble on park properties due to very clear rules and regulations in place for each park. Sheriff Higgs said that the schools were somewhat different because no one is allowed on school property when school is not in session. He said that if there is a County-sanctioned function on school property that can run after dusk, participants need to leave immediately after the event ends because they can be charged with trespassing. Sheriff Higgs said that the adult soccer games at Fauquier High School sometimes run after dark and there are occasional alcohol related problems, but these are not County-sanctioned events.

Mr. Sinclair asked what to anticipate if there were two lighted venues in use at the same time and if we should depend on the Sheriff's Office to move people out of the park. He also asked if there would be an added safety/security advantage if the park was gated.

Mr. Miller answered that the lights are on timers and shut down automatically. Parks/Recreation staff stays on-site to assist getting vehicles out. He noted that if owners of cars cannot be found the park gates are locked and the owners have to make arrangements to remove their car.

Mr. Atherton asked the Sheriff Department's procedure if only one field is in use and the rest of the park is not and the Sheriff responded that the deputy would check all of the facility as a matter of course, regardless if there were only one event.

Responding to a question from Mr. Atherton, Sheriff Higgs said lighted areas were always safer and a deterrent to undesirable activity but noted that lighting an area is more costly.

Mrs. Fries asked if there had been any problems at Marshall Middle School or Coleman Elementary School. Mr. Graham said there have been no problems at those schools and that when the lights go out people go to their cars quickly. Mrs. Fries asked what happened if a game was not finished and the automatic lights went out. Mr. Graham replied that the game is over once the lights go off.

Mr. Wheeler suggested that these issues could be covered in the master plan for the park.

Sheriff Higgs said ordinances and security arrangements need to be set up so that his department can protect the area since his deputies always patrol parks in the area they are assigned. The Sheriff stressed that rules and safety issues need to be in place before the park opens and these rules and regulations need to allow for the eventual growth of the facility.

Mr. Sinclair asked if there was any more information on internal congestion and the number of people that could be present at one time if all the venues were in use.

Mr. Miller answered that there is a provision in the RFP for the design engineers to review all plans and work that has been done and make suggested changes. Sheriff Higgs suggested that traffic patterns should also be part of the work of the traffic consultant and the engineers designing the facility, citing the traffic pattern flow designed by his department in use at Great Meadow for the Gold Cup Races. He pointed out problems have occurred at Vint Hill when numerous events are being held at once and traffic flow

was not considered. Mr. Sinclair said he was pleased Dick Keller of KellerCo was a traffic consultant on this project and is anxious to see how he can assist in the design. Mr. Atherton asked the Sheriff's advice on the number of entrances that should be considered with security in mind. Sheriff Higgs said one gate gives the most security and that two (2) gates side by side would also work. However, he said two gates in separate locations are very difficult to monitor. The Sheriff also noted that one gate could be a problem in case of an emergency and suggested an emergency entrance be part of the park design.

Mr. Atherton noted that the property would probably have a split-rail fence but asked the Sheriff if he felt a chain link fence would help with security. Sheriff Higgs replied that he didn't feel chain link fences offered more security, saying if people want to get in, they will do so.

6. Site Lighting Issues

Mr. Mabry reported that based on recommendations from Rick Carr, Director of Community Development, he has contacted a lighting consultant firm in Boulder, Colorado that specializes in lighting historic sites, recreation sites and dealing with negative light impact on neighboring properties. He has had initial discussions with the firm and is expecting additional information on their availability and fees.

7. Amendments to Contract with FYSCC

This item has been delayed to a future meeting.

8. Roundtable

1. Mrs. Fries said she had heard lots of positive feedback and talk about the public hearing scheduled for Monday, June 17th.
2. Mrs. Glascock asked if someone had been fishing in the pond on the park site and Mr. Sinclair asked Mr. Atherton for his opinion from a legal standpoint about children riding mini-bikes and 4-wheelers on the property. Mr. Sinclair asked if signs should be posted prohibiting certain activities. Mr. Atherton said that at the current time security on the property is the responsibility of the Parks & Recreation Department. Mr. Miller said that they have observed people walking dogs and some fishing; however, use of 4-wheelers would not be allowed. Mr. Sinclair asked if there was a sign reading "No unauthorized vehicles" on the property and Mr. Miller said the signs had not been posted. Mr. Atherton said there should be a "no trespassing" sign posted so if someone wants to go on the property they will need to ask Parks & Recreation's permission. He asked Mrs. Glascock to call him or Mr. Miller if she sees people on the property.
3. Mr. Sinclair asked about the gypsy moth infestation and Mrs. Glascock said she had seen them on the property. Mr. Mabry replied that Mr. Bridges, County Environmental Services, had inspected the property and suggested no action at this time. Mr. Bridges recommended that the property should be monitored annually.
4. Mr. Mabry briefly commented that he is in early stages of discussion with the groundwater engineers that would perform groundwater testing on the property.

5. Mr. Atherton reminded everyone about the public hearing on Monday, June 17th at Marshall Middle School. He said as a follow up on the groundwater study that it is extremely important since there cannot be any damage to neighboring properties' water supplies.

9. Set Next Meeting Date

The next regular committee meeting is scheduled for 7:00 PM, Thursday, July 11, 2002, at the Marshall Community Center Library.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.